

Voting Rights Act. My special thanks to Tom Davis, my good friend and strong partner on this bill, who retired at the end of last session. It was Tom's idea to pair the District with Utah after Utah narrowly missed getting a seat following the last census. I will always be grateful to Tom for the unfailing bipartisan spirit that characterized all his work as chair of the Oversight and Government Reform committee, especially his consistent respect for home rule and for affording me every opportunity to fashion this bill when he was in the Republican majority and I was a minority member. I must also thank the two important coalitions of organizations that have led this fight, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, whose leader, Wade Henderson also has been a close advisor throughout the many years of this struggle, and D.C. Vote, and its leader Ilir Zherka, who gave our bill indispensable strength through a superior grassroots organization that led the successful lobbying strategy here and nationwide and singlehandedly raised the funds necessary to take D.C.'s struggle national.

There is every reason to believe that the D.C. bill will finally prevail this year. The bill easily passed in the House in 2007, and now has an estimated 64 votes in the Senate, considerably more than the 60 needed. The addition of seven Democratic senators, who replaced seven Republican opponents of the bill, together with the eight remaining Republicans who supported the bill, should assure that the bill will have significantly more than the 57 Senate votes it received in 2007. We are equally encouraged that President-elect Barack Obama, who was a co-sponsor of the bill in the Senate, will sign the D.C. House Voting Rights Act when it reaches his desk.

My service in Congress has been defined by the search for a way to get full representation for the city where my family has lived since before the Civil War. That search has been guided by the pursuit of the maximum possible, including the two-day debate followed by a vote on statehood more than 10 years ago, the vote I won in the Committee of the Whole during my second term, and the "No Taxation Without Representation" Act for votes both in the House and Senate. The struggle has been driven always by what was required but also by what was possible, as with the Committee of the Whole vote on some but not all matters on the House floor and the Home Rule Act, the path-breaking enacted before I came to Congress that gave the city partial self-government.

The Congress which has always been divided by regional and parochial concerns, never does what is clearly right, even granting a vote to American citizens who are second per capita in federal income taxes paid to support their government and have served in every war, including the war that created our country driven by the slogan of "No Taxation without Representation." However, the people of the District of Columbia have never ceased demanding the full measure of their rights, while insisting on all that is possible for each generation. The people of the nation's proud capital will never give up on our full rights as American citizens.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT "RED"  
McKEON

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Robert "Red" McKeon on being inducted into the Connecticut Firefighters Hall of Fame. There is perhaps no one more worthy of such an honor than Red.

Red has been a leader in his community for over 60 years. In 1944, Red joined the Occum, Connecticut Volunteer Fire Department. Red served in various roles within the department before becoming fire chief in 1960, a position he held for 34 years. Red was not only an active and committed fireman, but he was also a pioneer. During Red's tenure, he ensured that Occum's department led the way in improving the life saving services which they provide to the people of eastern Connecticut. Occum was the first department in the state of Connecticut to employ two-way radio communication in fire trucks and other emergency service vehicles. Occum was also the first department that employed a computer to develop the skills of its first responders.

In 1970, Red founded the Occum volunteer ambulance service to provide the residents of Occum access to state-of-the-art emergency services. Red has also been a pioneer in taking care of his fellow first responders. Red led the charge for establishing a pension system for volunteer firefighters. Despite putting their lives in on the line every day, volunteer firefighters do not receive a pension in recognition of their service. Red worked with State and local leaders in Connecticut to establish a program that allows local communities like Occum to establish retirement programs for volunteer firefighters.

Red has demonstrated his commitment to our first responders at the State, national and even international levels. After serving in the Connecticut State Firemen's Association since 1944, he was elected State President by his fellow firemen in 1977 and 1978.

In 1991, Red became the national chairman of the National Volunteer Fire Council, the largest volunteer firefighter organization in the country, and served in the post until 1994. His leadership within that organization and at home in Connecticut received further recognition when the Council chose him as the National Firefighter of the Year in October 1999. Along with this award, Red was presented with a certificate for \$2000 from Scott Health and Safety. In keeping with his unselfish nature, Red announced that he would donate the proceeds to the North Carolina Relief Fund to help fire departments that were devastated by Hurricane Floyd.

Red has also been generous enough to share his talents and expertise with the world. Red served as a representative for the United States at the World Federation of Firefighters meetings in Argentina, Denmark, Indonesia and Japan and is an active member of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors.

After a lifetime of service to his community and his fellow first responders it should come as no surprise that Red would be chosen as an inductee to the Connecticut Firefighters' Hall of Fame. This latest recognition is one

that is well deserved, and I applaud my friend Red for receiving this prestigious award. We in eastern Connecticut are lucky to have such a fine public servant.

IN HONOR OF CATHERINE "LENA"  
ZABARA DICHELE

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th birthday of Lena Dichele, a living example of the hard work and spirit that we cherish as Americans. Born on January 1, 1909, Lena immigrated to the United States at age 7. Her story began at Ellis Island, where so many other American stories began. Although Lena stopped her formal education in the 8th grade to help her family in trying economic times, she went on to become a life-long educator.

At the age of 14, Lena learned to sew at the Waterbury Connecticut Girls' Club, where she transformed this skill into her life's passion. Lena went on to become a sewing instructor at the Girls Club and an informal authority on all things sewing at Tops Department Store in Waterbury. She was also familiar enough with electric sewing machines to assist customers and perform repairs. Lena began sharing her love of sewing with seniors throughout Waterbury by teaching at the Pearl Street Neighborhood Center, the Palladino Center and the Mattatuck Senior Center, where she ended her 83 year career in 2006 at the age of 97.

On New Year's Day, Lena's family gathered to celebrate her 100th birthday. But more appropriately, they celebrated the impact that she has had on her family, her friends, and her community, during those 100 years. Lena's story is a truly American story, and I am honored to represent her in Congress, and be able to congratulate her today, here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, on this milestone.

HONORING HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL-USA ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Hostelling International-USA on their 75th anniversary. Since 1934, Hostelling International-USA has encouraged cultural interaction among its guests by providing affordable overnight accommodations for domestic and international travelers.

In my home state of Oregon, Hostelling International-USA operates three facilities, which together welcome more than 35,000 visitors each year.

J.R.R. Tolkien once wrote: "Not all those who wander are lost." Travel reminds us of the unity in our diverse world, and I believe that the more we interact with others, the more we can understand of ourselves.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Hostelling International-USA on this important occasion.